September 12th: Memorial of the Most Holy Name of Mary

Gospel text (*Lk* 1:26-27): In the sixth month, the angel Gabriel was sent from God to a town of Galilee called Nazareth, to a virgin betrothed to a man named Joseph, of the house of David, and the virgin's name was Mary.

"The virgin's name was Mary"

Fr. Joan PERERA i Faura
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Today, as we celebrate the Feast of the Most Holy Name of Mary—which means "Star of the Sea"—we honor her not simply out of admiration or awe. We praise her because she opened the path for humanity to be reunited with God. She is the leader who guides us toward true life: the life of human dignity taught to us by Christ, the life of authentic love.

Mary's experiences were intense from the very beginning of her youth: an unexpected pregnancy, a betrothed who wasn't sure whether he should leave her, the possibility of being accused of adultery, the long journey "into the hill country" to help her cousin Elizabeth. Then came the trip to Bethlehem, heavily pregnant, giving birth as a stranger in poor conditions, and the surprising visits of shepherds and kings who came to adore the Child.

Later, she lost her Son and found Him speaking with the teachers in the Temple—yet she could not fully understand. As an adult, Jesus left home to preach, placing Himself in direct conflict with the religious authorities, with all the danger that entailed. And finally, she stood at the foot of the Cross, watching Him bloodied and collapsing under its weight.

Through all these moments, Mary responded with hope and serenity, always trusting in God—even when she did not understand what was happening. Let us apply this to our own lives: when we face what we do not understand, do we place it in God's hands? Or do we fight against Him, trying to make everything turn out the way we want? Do we want a God who serves us, or do we, like Mary, become humble servants of God?

Let us contemplate Mary! More than "doing," Mary "lets God do." She allows God to guide her through the painful and the difficult. How many conflicts in our world could be avoided if we, too, allowed God to lead us through life's challenges! As St. Bernard so beautifully urges us: "If the winds of temptation arise, if you stumble upon the rocks of tribulation, look to the star, call upon Mary… With her help you will not go astray; with her protection you will not fall; with her hand to guide you, you will not grow weary. And you

will experience the truth of the Gospel: ‘The virgin’s name was Mary” (Lk 1:27).

Mary, our companion on the journey, Stella Maris, help us to follow in your footsteps of faithfulness, trust, and generosity—with all our heart, and with joyful surrender.